



STATE OF THE STATE TUCSON

January 11, 2011
Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Thank you.

I want to begin by recognizing Jack Camper for his 33 years of service to the Tucson business community and to our state.

Jack, I know you will not be going far from the interests of the Chamber, but still you'll be missed.

Your leadership skills have been an incredible asset to the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce.

On behalf of Arizona, "Thank you."

We've been blessed by your talents and blessed to have your guidance.

Please, join me in giving Jack a round of applause.

Again, I want to tell you how grateful I am that you're here today. I know your hearts and minds are far away from this room.

Mine, too.

I had every intention of delivering a State of the State address to you ... detailing a bold, solid plan to create jobs, improve education and reform Arizona's tax code.

It's a plan I believe in.

But it's a topic for another day.

Today is not a day for politics or policy.

Today I want to talk to you personally.

I want to talk about Arizona's heart, and the state we find it in after such a horrific, tragic Saturday.

Among the lessons that life has taught me is that ... Sometimes, loss just finds you.

You don't expect it.

You don't want to accept it.

But, suddenly, you're challenged by something dark and ugly, a pain you can hardly bear.

Loss found all of us Saturday, at the Safeway a few miles from here.

It was a beautiful day. Our neighbors were grocery shopping, running errands. They were gathering to meet their Congresswoman -- to see the Gabby Giffords' smile all of us know so well.

A gunman stepped from out of nowhere.

In a minute, he took away six loved ones ... and took away our sense of well-being.

There is no way to measure what Tucson and all of Arizona lost in that moment. The statistics ... six dead, 14 wounded ... in no way explain the depth of this tragedy.

There's no way to quantify the loss of a fine public servant like U.S. District Court Judge John Roll.

There's no way to measure the deaths of good people, parents and grandparents like Dorwan Stoddard, Phyllis Schneck and Dot Morris.

Gabe Zimmerman, also killed, was only 30 years old. He was soon to be married, devoted to social work, a fighter for justice.

There's no measuring the void someone like Gabe leaves behind.

We also lost Christina Taylor Green. Born on another day of unparalleled sadness ... September 11, 2001 ... Christina was only 9 years old.

She was a new member of student council at Mesa Verde Elementary School. She loved ballet, swimming and baseball.

We can never know what Christina might have become.

We cannot imagine what the families of our six innocent neighbors are feeling.

Nor can we know the pain of the wounded, some of whom still are struggling for their lives.

But, we are not helpless.

We have the power of prayer.

So, I ask you to join me in a moment of silence, to pray for those we've lost, the injured and the suffering.

Thank you.

Since Saturday, all of us have read and heard a lot about the state of Arizona.

I want to speak to you about the Arizona I KNOW, the place we saw again even on such an awful Saturday.

IT IS a place of service, a place of heroes, a place with a bruised, battered heart that I know will get past this hideous moment.

Gabby Giffords is a friend of mine.

A year ago, I came to Tucson for a speech like this and promised to serve beside you. I asked you to join me, to put aside political differences in favor of serving our state.

Gabby Giffords never wavered.

She joined me in the field ... always ready to help ... always graceful ... always about more than her own self-interest.

Gabby is a perfect example of what it means to serve ... a perfect example for her constituents and of this city.

I am proud to know her. I know you are beyond proud to call her your own.

The Arizona I know is full of heroes ... ordinary citizens doing extraordinary things.

On Saturday, some of our neighbors shielded strangers from bullets.

Others ... people like Patricia Maisch, Dr. Steven Rayle and Joseph Zamudio ... confronted the gunman.

They wrestled him to the ground, grabbed his gun, pinned him down until the first responders could arrive.

And arrive they did. Police, fire fighters, EMTs. They rushed to the scene with speed and professionalism.

There, they found Daniel Hernandez, a University of Arizona junior, an intern, working to slow Gabby's bleeding and save her life.

We paid tribute to Daniel yesterday, and I want to do so again, today.

Daniel held Gabby's hand all the way to University Medical Center.

There, medical teams worked furiously on Gabby and 13 more victims.

Their precision and skill absolutely saved lives.

That is the Arizona I know best ... selfless ... dedicated ... working as one to oppose evil ... fighting together to overcome darkness and pain.

Our state, like all of America, has been through difficult times before.

Fortunately, these struggles have united us, made us stronger and more enduring. We have been challenged, called to the task ... and we have responded.

We will do so again. I am sure of it.

Those who serve our state and our country will do so in ways that honor those we have lost.

We will continue to meet again on perfect, sunny days.

I'm reminded of the words of Isaiah, a passage I've read many, many times.

We will rise on wings like eagles ... we will run and not get weary ... we will walk and not grow weak.

I ask for your help ... and your prayers ... so that our Great State is guided with courage and devotion.

I ask for your service and promise you mine in return.

I ask for your courage and offer in return everything within my power to give.

May God bless all the victims, their families and those suffering from Saturday's tragedy.

May God bless those who serve us in the cause of freedom and justice.

May He bless you and your families and our Great State of Arizona.

And may God always bless and protect the United States of America. Thank you.